

NFAC 0562-80
22 January 1980

Memorandum for DD/NFA

Subject: Major Estimates of Soviet Military Capabilities
in Situations Less than General War

1. Recent events in South Asia suggest that the Soviets now perceive that they have achieved strategic nuclear parity with the US and, therefore, can exploit their superiority in conventional forces to achieve objectives in peripheral land areas (other than NATO and China) with relative impunity. The Soviets moreover, have recently demonstrated in Afghanistan their ability to mobilize, ready, deploy rapidly, and sustain large Soviet forces outside of the USSR and to direct coordinated operations over extended areas at the periphery of their heartland. In addition, it is becoming increasingly clear that the Soviets intend to remain indefinitely in Afghanistan with sizeable forces. In light of these developments, we wonder whether our present range of estimative coverage of Soviet military capabilities is complete.

2. At present, the range of current and presently planned Soviet military estimates, excluding the strategic nuclear related efforts, cover: a NATO-Warsaw Pact war, to include Soviet military operations in the Pacific; the Sino-Soviet military balance, to include the balance in Northeast Asia; Soviet naval readiness; Soviet naval capabilities to interdict sea lines of communications; and Soviet capabilities to project military power in distant areas. Additionally, there is the estimate on the Arab-Israeli military balance.

3. A new situation now exists that suggests two additional Soviet military estimates that need to be undertaken as a matter of priority, and that therefore demand a significant reallocation of collection and analytical resources. These are:

~~ALL PORTIONS ARE
CLASSIFIED SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

DERIVATIVE CL BY SIGNERS
☐ DECL ☒ REVW ON 22 Jan 1986
DERIVED FROM _____

Subject: Major Estimates of Soviet Military Capabilities
in Situations Less than General War

-- A Soviet military campaign in Southwest Asia
involving incursions under various scenarios into Iran
and/or Pakistan.

-- A Soviet military campaign in the Balkans to bring
Yugoslavia back into the Soviet orbit.

4. The SRP realizes that the redirection of analytical
resources, primarily those of OSR, as well as collection
priorities, requires additional study and planning. Never-
theless, if the above estimates are to be the product of
thorough and comprehensive analysis and still be done in a
reasonable length of time, the redirection of resources
requires immediate attention. This may necessitate a
reordering of overall priorities, but in the opinion of the
SRP, this is fully warranted by current and foreseeable
circumstances. Finally, if additional resources are indicated,
this might well be considered in current planning for the
FY82 intelligence budget.


Bruce Palmer, Jr.


Klaus Knorr

cc: C/NIC
D/OSR
NIO/GPF
NIO/USSR-EE
NIO/CH-EAP
NIO/WE
NIO/NESA